(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the next date, if decided, for the test; and

(c) whether due notice and facilities for travel would be provided to the candidates and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Due to administrative reasons, the written examination for the posts of Clerk Grade-II, Trains Clerk, Ticket Collector and Commercial Clerk scheduled on 28.10.2007 was deferred to 25.11.2007.

(c) Wide publicity of the postponed examination was made through Newspapers etc. well in advance. As per the extant rules, only Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates have been provided free rail travelling facilities for appearing in the examination.

Review of Tatkal System

1310. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether South Cental Railway has introduced a commercial system of allotting 50 per cent of all Reserved Accommodations in express trains to the "Tatkal" category;

(b) whether it is a fact that Railways has reserved only 25 percent of accommodations as Tatkal category as a national policy;

(c) to what extent South Central Railway is over-reacting and exploiting the public;

(d) the steps proposed to review the present Tatkal reservation policy for accommodation and its impact on the public; and

(e) the measures proposed to increase train accommodation in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The extent of accommodation earmarked in various trains under Tatkal scheme varies from 10% to 30% of the accommodation depending upon the average utilization.

(c) Tatkal accommodation earmarked on South Central Railway is as per extant norms.

(d) Review of the policies including Tatkal scheme is a continuous process.

(e) Extra coaches depending upon the general waiting list are being attached to clear wait list passengers in various tains starting from Andhra Pradesh to different destinations. Besides, special trains are also run to various destinations during Summer, Winter and Festival vacations.

Backlog quota in promotion

1311. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry had converted backlog in promotion quota to Direct Recruitment during financial year 2006-07 and 2007-08; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the dates on which written tests were conducted and how many SC/ST candidates were recruited against such backlog during last two years, post-wise and group-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) There are 285 (152 in Group 'C' and 133 in Group 'D') vacancies of promotional categories which were diverted to direct recruitment quota during the year 2006-07 and 2007-08 due to non-availability of eligible Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (SC and ST) candidates in feeder grades, recruitment against which are under the process through Railway Recruitment Boards. However, in order to wipe out the backlog vacancies of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes existing as on 1.7.2004 on the Indian Railways through on going Special Promotion Drive-2004 , due to non-availability of eligible Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SCs and STs) in feeder grades, as many as '5641' vacancies of promotional categories were diverted to recruitment quota, wherever it was permissible, for filling up from open market expeditiously through various Railway Recruitment Boards.

Out of the above mentioned '5641' diverted/converted vacancies, as many as '1336' have already been filled up and the balance '4305' vacancies are at various stages of recruitment. Every effort is being made to complete the recruitment expeditiously.

House Panel favours Iron ore Export curbs

1312. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of a report that "House Panel favours iron ore export curb" which appeared in newspaper;

(b) whether Consulative Panel have empowered Government to ensure the availability of iron ore, cooking coal and other minerals in order to meet the expansion requirements of Steel Industry;

(c) if so, the completed details in this regard; and

(d) what steps Government proposes to take for allocation of critical inputs on priority basis to large steel plants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Consultative Committee attached to the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers and Steel in its meeting held on 7th November, 2007 at Chandigarh expressed concern about the need to ensure availability of critical raw materials like iron ore and cooking coal to cater to both present as well as post expansion needs of steel plants.

(d) Details shall be laid on the table of the House.